



Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the UN **Geneva**

Statement by Pakistan at the 71st Session of the World Health Assembly **(21-26 May 2018, Geneva)**

Mr. President
Dr Tedros, Director General, WHO
Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

It is my proud privilege to be in the midst of such a distinguished audience.

Investment in health sector is of utmost importance for advancing the developmental agenda at national and international levels. Health is an important determinant of economic and social prosperity of a country.

The Government of Pakistan stands firm in its resolve to ensure that its population is healthy and has equitable access to quality health services for everyone-everywhere.

It is very unfortunate that around the world, more than 400 million people lack access to essential health services, and at least 100 million people are pushed into poverty by paying for health care out of their own pockets. Universal health coverage is a powerful

strategy; it not only improves health, but also reduces poverty, creates jobs, drives economic growth, promotes gender equality, and protects populations against epidemics. The good news is that universal health coverage is achievable. All countries at all income levels can achieve it through their domestic resources to improve the health of their populations. Universal health coverage is possible with political commitment.

Pakistan's National Health Vision 2016-25 provides for achieving universal health coverage through efficient, effective, equitable, accessible and affordable health services to its populace.

The Government of Pakistan is fully alive to its responsibilities towards the health and well-being of people of Pakistan. We duly acknowledge that goals of development cannot be realized without taking steps towards building a healthy nation. Universal Health Coverage is the foundation for achieving not only SDG 3 but indeed is pivotal for achieving the rest of the global development agenda as well.

Our Government launched Prime Minister's National Health Programme in 2015 with the objective to provide universal health coverage through a cashless health insurance scheme for the poor to enable them to access needed health-care services.

The programme is benefitting 3 million families in accessing quality healthcare for various illnesses from 135 empaneled hospitals in 41 focused districts. We aim to universally expand the coverage of this critical intervention across all over Pakistan.

Mr. President,

Mother and Child health has been one of our top most priorities. A ten-point vision document endorsed by all provinces was developed by our Ministry to give strategic direction. Special attention has been paid to strengthening Immunization of mother and child under the Expanded Program on Immunization to save them from deadly and

debilitating diseases. With our collective efforts we have achieved fifteen to twenty percent increase in coverage of EPI vaccination.

Mr. President,

We are aware that Universal health coverage includes not just health care but also health promotion and prevention and a broader public health approach. A strong primary health care platform with integrated community engagement within the health system is the backbone of universal health coverage, which we are striving for.

Let us re-affirm our commitment in our individual as well as collective capacities for ensuring equity and quality through the delivery of integrated package of essential preventive and curative care services to every citizen.

I wish the Seventy-First World Health Assembly great success in its deliberations.

Thank you.
